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Replacement equipment transforms power for The Dalles

Bonneville Power Administration

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THE DALLES, Ore. - The Dalles should have good news July 26 when workers at the Bonneville Power Administration finish installing a \$1 million piece of equipment at its Big Eddy substation, three miles east of town. The equipment - a transformer bank - will improve service to the Dalles area. It transforms high voltage into lower voltage electricity and supplies power to Northwest Aluminum Company.

"The new bank should go a long way toward returning the system to normal service," Bruce Lavier said. Lavier is a field services specialist for BPA.

BPA lost the original 40-year-old transformer June 21 when a lightning arrestor failed and damaged the transformer's electrical core. BPA located a replacement at one of its substations near Snohomish, Wash., shipped it to Big Eddy and began preparing it for installation July 4.

Meanwhile, power for The Dalles was supported by power lines from the west and south of the city.

Transformer banks can be as large as a single-car garage, yet contain instruments as fragile as fine china. Each unit goes through several steps and tests before it is ready for use. The Snohomish unit also had to be modified to fit the operations at Big Eddy.

Lavier said BPA also is working with managers at Northwest Aluminum and officials Corps of Engineers at The Dalles Dam to make improvements at those locations.

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